

4-102 News Programs

1. The AFRTS Broadcast Center shall provide a broad spectrum of news programs and materials from the major U.S. commercial and public broadcasting networks and wire services. This service provided by the Broadcast Center shall be the principal source of world and national (U.S.) news for AFRTS outlets.

2. The Department of Defense continually assures the U.S. commercial and public networks that it will protect the integrity of all news programs and materials. No changes shall be made in the editorial content of any news programs and materials that are broadcast. Radio news actualities and correspondents' reports may be excerpted from network newscasts, but must be excerpted in their entirety. Radio actualities presented within correspondents' reports may not be excerpted. Television news programming may not be excerpted in any manner unless specifically authorized by the AFRTS Broadcast Center. If television news programming is procured locally by an outlet, as authorized in paragraph 12, below, the provisions of the contract with the source of such programming shall apply.

3. Outlets shall only use news analyses or commentaries provided by the AFRTS Broadcast Center. Outlets shall identify analyses or commentaries as such, distinguishing them from newscasts and straight news reporting.

4. The AFRTS Broadcast Center and AFRTS outlets' news policy shall be guided by the principle of fairness. This principle applies to issues rather than persons and does not require "equal opportunities." It does require outlets to provide "reasonable opportunities" for the presentation of conflicting views on the important controversial public issues. All AFRTS news programming shall be characterized by its fairness.

5. AFRTS political broadcasting policy is based on the FCC's Law of Political Broadcasting and Cablecasting, which does require "equal-opportunities" for political candidates. For example, a U.S. broadcast station may grant "equal opportunities" to a candidate to compensate for a speech or other appearance by a rival candidate. Accordingly, if an AFRTS outlet carries an original speech (or appearance), it is required to broadcast the answering response, which shall also be made available from the Broadcast Center. It is noted, however, that the requirement for "equal opportunities" does not apply to four kinds of news programs: newscasts, news interviews, news documentaries, and spot coverage of news events. All AFRTS political programming shall be characterized by its fairness.

6. The AFRTS Broadcast Center shall provide a free flow of political programming from U.S. commercial and public networks. The Broadcast Center and AFRTS outlets shall maintain the same "equal opportunities" balance offered by these sources. Outlets should make extensive use of such programming, especially during presidential election years, and should provide their audience with the political analyses, commentaries, and public affairs programs provided by AFRTS-BC, in addition to political hard news.

7. Outlets shall disseminate service., command, local community, and host-country news that may be of interest to major segments of their military and DoD civilian personnel audience and family members. Manipulation or

censorship of any news content is expressly forbidden. Commanders or members of their staffs shall not edit or delete portions of the contents of any international, national, or local news program. A negative story regarding the military or community is not grounds for editing, manipulation, or censorship.

8. To comply with published host-country sensitivities, the U.S. Ambassador or his designated representative may restrict an AFRTS outlet from airing a news program. The only exception to this policy is that the Commander in Chief of a Unified or Specified command retains full authority to withhold or delete news programs which would compromise on-going military operations or jeopardize national security during periods of conflict. In these cases, news programs must be deleted in total. News programs may not be edited. An AFRTS outlet must immediately advise the local command, AFIS, and the parent Broadcasting Service as to the background of the decision to restrict the airing of a news program and the nature of the action taken.

9. Outlets may mention the name of a commercial sponsor, along with **other** pertinent facts, in news stories and local announcements concerning DoD and USO sponsored shows.

10. The content, format, and presentation of local news programs shall be carefully supervised to ensure that such programming is factual, fair, and unbiased, and is in compliance with all the applicable provisions of this Regulation. Equal care shall be exercised in the selection of editors, newscasters, and supervisory personnel who direct and disseminate the news.

11. Locally produced newscasts shall contain appropriate attribution at the beginning and end of each newscast. Normally, it is necessary to **reattribute** individual news items related to U.S. Government or DoD policies and operations. Outlets shall not delete source attribution in news programs and materials provided by the AFRTS Broadcast Center.

12. AFRTS outlets will not conduct "investigative reporting" but they shall conduct as much local news gathering as their **personnel** resources will allow. Outlets are encouraged to produce news specials on subjects of interest and/or concern within the communities and commands served. Such reports shall be fully-coordinated with the appropriate public affairs offices to ensure accuracy and balanced reporting. AFRTS outlets shall not function as news gathering bureaus for civilian news organizations but shall function as news gatherers for their local stations. AFRTS outlets shall, on a regular basis, coordinate with all local commands, public affairs offices, and command sponsored organizations to ensure that all segments of their authorized audience are given an opportunity to input news items on AFRTS news programs. Within the outlet's resources, the station shall strive to serve as the primary source of local news by keeping a finely tuned news team available to go to the source of news and report on the events." The news staff and the command information team discussed in chapter 5 shall work closely together to provide the local Commander the best possible vehicle for command and service information.

13. To ensure complete and balanced news programming, AFRTS outlets have authority to contract for commercial news services, subject to normal budgeting and contracting procedures.

4-103 Unauthorized Programs

1. In the past few decades, audio and video pornographic materials have become prevalent and easily attainable within the United States and in many overseas areas. The airing, reproduction, or mere existence of audio and/or video pornographic materials within the premises of any AFRTS facility is prohibited and constitutes a violation of this Regulation. The airing, reproduction, or possession of any such materials within an AFRTS facility shall also be punishable under the provisions of Article 92, Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ).

2. The airing or reproduction of any unauthorized audio or video program materials within an AFRTS facility shall also constitute a violation of this Regulation. Examples of such materials are: racist propaganda; audio/video materials whose sole purpose is to demean any race, nationality, or religion; materials promoting the use of drugs or alcohol, or promoting deviant or socially unacceptable behavior; material promoting religious cults; material promoting the overthrow of governments, etc.